

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-6. (Previously canceled)

7. (Withdrawn from consideration)

8. (Currently amended) A method of regeneration of bone or cartilage in an animal subject suffering breakage, degeneration, depletion or damage of bone or cartilage, by administration of comprising administering to said animal subject a DNA molecule, wherein said DNA molecule comprises a the nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of: (1) as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 20; (2) a nucleotide sequence having at least about 79% identity as SEQ ID NO: 20 and or a nucleotide sequence coding for a SOX-9 polypeptide wherein said SOX-9 polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 21; and (3) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes to SEQ ID NO: 20 under standard hybridization conditions and encodes a SOX-9 polypeptide.

9-13. (Withdrawn from consideration)

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein said DNA molecule comprises a the nucleotide sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 20.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein said DNA molecule comprises a nucleotide sequence ~~having at least about 79% identity to SEQ ID NO: 20 and~~ coding for a SOX-9 polypeptide, and wherein said SOX-9 polypeptide comprises ~~an~~ the amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 21 ~~or an amino acid sequence having at least about 93.5% identity to SEQ ID NO: 21.~~

16. (Currently canceled)

17-18. (Withdrawn from consideration)